# Parkinson Pathfinder

**Summer 2026** Northwest Chapter Edition


## The Power of Play



apda AMERICAN PARKINSON DISEASE ASSOCIATION

**Summer 2026** Northwest Chapter Edition

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**COVER PHOTO**

**Ljubomir Medenica (LJ)** has lived in Alaska since 2006. He worked as a professor at the University of Alaska Southeast and retired in 2024, when he was diagnosed with Parkinson's. After his diagnosis, LJ started playing ping pong intensively. Since then, he has attended two major international tournaments, the French Open (September 2025, where he won a silver medal in his group) and the World Championship in Italy (October 2025).

**APDA'S MISSION**

Every day, we provide the support, education, research, and community that will help everyone impacted by Parkinson's disease live life to the fullest.


AMERICAN PARKINSON DISEASE ASSOCIATION
NORTHWEST CHAPTER

Strength in optimism. Hope in progress.



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**In this issue, we explore the many ways people with Parkinson's are finding joy, creativity, connection, and movement. Because when activity is meaningful and enjoyable, we're more likely to stick with it, and that can make all the difference.**

When we think about Parkinson's, we often think about medications, appointments, exercise plans, and symptom management. Those things matter. But so does something that doesn't always make it into a treatment plan: play.

Every game has many different types of players. There's the Competitor who dives for every ball and keeps score like it's the championship match, and their arch-nemesis, the "I'm Just Here for Fun" player. The Team Player and the Cheerleader who encourage everyone around them. The Strategist who is a student of the game. And let's not forget about the Ringer, who claims they haven't played in years and then proceeds to dominate.

No matter which player you are, the important thing is that you're in the game.

Research continues to show that exercise is one of the most powerful tools available for managing Parkinson's symptoms. But success isn't just about finding an exercise program or activity; it's about finding an exercise program or activity that you will keep doing.

That's where play comes in.

In this issue, we explore the many ways people with Parkinson's are finding joy, creativity, connection, and movement. Because when activity is meaningful and enjoyable, we're more likely to stick with it, and that can make all the difference. Whether it's dancing, boxing, playing a game of catch with a grandchild, walking with friends, or playing pickleball or ping pong, fun is not a distraction from wellness—it's the best part of wellness.

So however you play—competitor, cheerleader, strategist, or comic relief—keep playing! Parkinson's may change the rules, but it doesn't take us out of the game. And the game is better when you're in it.

**Kirsten Richards**
Executive Director,
APDA Northwest

Contact us to switch to the digital edition, or if you no longer wish to receive the *Pathfinder*.

**APDA Northwest staff at the recent Parkinson's Awareness Night with the Mariners**

# The Power of Play

## Why Enjoyable, Engaging Activity Matters in Parkinson's

When people hear the word exercise, they often picture something structured: a walking plan, a class schedule, a set of therapy drills, or time on a stationary bike. All of those can be valuable for people living with Parkinson's disease. But research and real-world experience point to something equally important: movement may be easier to sustain when it feels enjoyable, mentally engaging, and meaningful. In other words, play matters.

This article is not meant to suggest that every idea here is settled science, but rather to bring together research, observation, and reflections on movement that may resonate with people living with Parkinson's.

That idea is not just feel-good advice. It reflects a growing understanding of what helps people with Parkinson's keep moving over time. Exercise is one of the most powerful tools available for managing Parkinson's symptoms. It can support balance, flexibility, strength, mobility, and overall quality of life. Emerging research also suggests that regular exercise may play a role in slowing functional decline.

But Parkinson's care is not only about whether a person can exercise. It is also about whether they will want to keep doing it. That is where play comes in.

For someone with Parkinson's, play does not have to mean games in the traditional sense. It can mean any activity that combines movement with enjoyment, curiosity, rhythm, challenge, skill-building, or social interaction. Dance classes, tai chi, yoga, singing with movement, drumming, group fitness, interactive games, and recreational sports can all fall into that category.

This broader lens matters because Parkinson's affects much more than tremor or slowness. It can also influence posture, gait, balance, reaction time, multitasking, mood, and confidence. Activities that are playful or immersive often challenge several of those systems at once. A dance class, for example, may involve rhythm, balance, memory, coordination, and social connection in the same session. Tai chi blends controlled movement, attention, posture, and weight shifting. Music-based movement and drumming can add timing, cueing, and mental focus.

These are not just fun extras. They are meaningful ways of asking the brain and body to work together in real time.

That has caught the attention of researchers. One area of growing interest is dual-task training, which combines physical movement with a second challenge such as attention, rhythm, or another cognitive task. This is especially relevant in Parkinson's because daily life rarely happens in a single-task environment. People walk while talking, turn while carrying objects, or move through busy spaces while processing information. Research suggests that this kind of combined training may help improve gait, balance, motor performance, and aspects of daily function.

Dance and rhythm-based movement have also drawn increasing attention. Studies suggest these approaches may support motor function, confidence, and quality of life. Exergaming and other interactive exercise formats are also being explored, with researchers examining how they may affect physical function, cognition, balance, and fall risk.

One of the most important takeaways from this body of research is that exercise does not have to be boring to be beneficial. In fact, enjoyment may be part of what makes it effective.

That matters because consistency is everything. A person may fully understand that exercise is helpful for Parkinson's and still struggle to stick with it. Symptoms, fatigue, motivation, transportation, access, and confidence can all get in the way. Research on exercise adherence shows that people are more likely to stay engaged when an activity matches their interests, feels achievable, and offers a sense of satisfaction or connection.

That insight is powerful. It suggests that the best activity is not always the one that looks most clinical or impressive on paper. It may be the one a person actually wants to do again next week.

This does not mean every fun activity is automatically safe or right for every person. Parkinson's symptoms vary widely, and exercise should be adapted to the individual. The goal is not to chase novelty for its own sake, but to find movement that is challenging enough to matter, safe enough to sustain, and enjoyable enough to become part of everyday life.

That may be one of the most hopeful messages in today's Parkinson's research: movement does not have to feel grim to be meaningful. Sometimes the activities that look the most joyful are also doing serious work.

For people living with Parkinson's, and for care partners helping support healthy routines, this opens an encouraging door. Movement can be purposeful without feeling punishing. It can be therapeutic without feeling like treatment every minute. And it can offer more than just physical benefits. It can build confidence, spark connection, bring variety to the week, and remind people that life with Parkinson's still has room for challenge, creativity, and enjoyment.

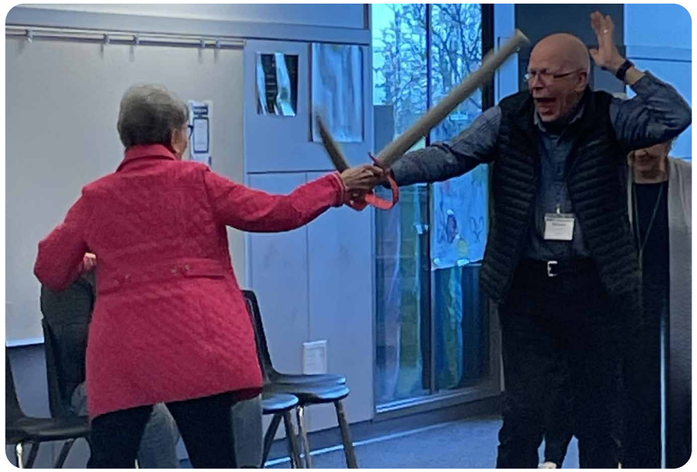
That is the real power of play.

### What Counts as Play?

Play can look different for everyone. For someone living with Parkinson's, it might include:

- Dance or movement classes
- Tai chi or yoga (the Northwest chapter offers yoga for PD every Friday at their Seattle office)
- Drumming or music-based exercise
- Interactive fitness games
- Recreational sports
- Group exercise with a social element
- Activities that involve rhythm, timing, skill, or friendly competition

The best choice is one that feels enjoyable, appropriate for your abilities, and realistic to return to again and again. APDA's Upcoming Virtual Events calendar highlights programs such as yoga, tai chi, singing, and more.



# A New Way Forward:

## How One Playful Pursuit Changed Life with Parkinson's

Q & A with **Dwight Slade**

Living with Parkinson's often means adapting, adjusting, and finding new ways forward. Sometimes those ways come from unexpected places—a dance class, a golf club, a paintbrush, a ping-pong paddle, or another activity that brings movement and enjoyment together. In this conversation, one Dwight Slade, PWP, shares how discovering a playful pursuit helped restore confidence, spark joy, and bring a fresh sense of possibility to life with Parkinson's.

**Can you tell us about the activity you discovered—or returned to—and how it first became part of your life with Parkinson's?**

As much time as I spent in front of audiences and wanting their attention, off stage, I really don't like people that much. So, I was reluctant when Whitney and I started going to a local support group. But I was lured back by the free muffins.

It was at this support group that I learned about the YMCA Rock Steady class. A new friend, Dennis, said that you get to beat the holy hell out of the bag. There is something very cathartic about hitting that bag. I try to go to this class two days a week, and it's been several years now.

**What drew you to this particular activity, and what made you want to keep going with it?**

Now I love seeing the people at class. It's a group I never knew I needed, and now I don't want to miss it. At the end of class, we put our hands in for a cheer, which usually references something colorful about our hatred for Parkinson's. I feel a lot of camaraderie in that moment, and I carry it with me long after class.

**In what ways, if any, has this pursuit changed how you feel physically, emotionally, or mentally?**

Parkinson's has already taken so much from me. I want to keep up doing things that help my mental and physical strength. Getting to class keeps me moving, and it boosts my attitude.

**Did it shift your outlook on Parkinson's or on what you felt was still possible for you? If so, how?**

Well, when I'm with my PD friends, I don't feel so alone with the disease.

**Were there any challenges, fears, or hesitations you had when getting started, and how did you work through them?**

I found some negativity in people attending groups, or at exercise class, but I had to stop and remember I was there for me. Besides, it would be far more off-putting if I walked into a Parkinson's class and everyone was on cloud 9.

The first time we went to the indoor rock climbing class, they said guys a lot older than me were climbing the wall. Out of bravado, I said, "I can do that." It was excruciating, but the coaches were so encouraging, and I trusted them. Before I knew it, I was at the top, ringing the bell.

**What would you say to another person living with Parkinson's who is hesitant to try something new, playful, or outside their comfort zone?**

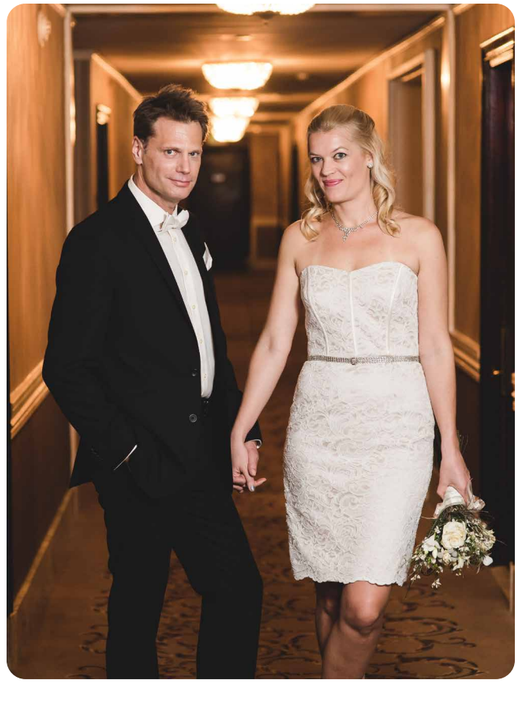
As a wise person once said, "Try not to take life too seriously."

**Dwight Slade** is an award-winning American stand-up comedian known for his sharp observational humor, intelligent storytelling, and energetic stage presence. He began performing at 14 alongside his longtime friend and fellow comedian Bill Hicks, helping launch a career that has spanned more than four decades. Slade has appeared on HBO, Comedy Central, and *The Tonight Show*, and has performed at major comedy festivals throughout North America and internationally.

A winner of both the Boston Comedy Festival and the Seattle International Comedy Competition, he is widely regarded as one of the Pacific Northwest's most accomplished comedians. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in November 2020. Dwight performed his last professional show in Alaska in September 2021, and his wife, Whitney Slade, was in the audience. Dwight and Whitney currently live in Boise, Idaho, with their Chihuahua Poodle Winston Slade.







# Finding Light Again:

## How Shared Activities Can Bring Joy Back into Life with Parkinson's

Q & A with **Whitney Slade**

When Parkinson's becomes part of daily life, it can be easy for routines to revolve around schedules, symptoms, and responsibilities. But joy still matters. In this interview, care partner Whitney Slade shares how fun, shared activities helped restore a sense of connection, lightness, and togetherness—and why those moments can be more powerful than they may seem.

"Dwight and I met in a comedy club, so our relationship started out pretty entertaining. He was a stand-up comic going on 40 years performing on stage, and I speak fluent sarcasm, pretty much exclusively. Between the travel (not all of it glamorous), brainstorming and writing together, and just the simple act of not taking ourselves too seriously, we always found the fun in both adventure and the day-to-day.

While "joy" isn't the first word that comes to mind when I think of Parkinson's, I believe there are still many ways to discover something new, or a new way of doing something you've always done, that brings a smile to you and your partner.

Before I share a few of the ways we find joy, I offer this tip: SLOW DOWN. The grand gestures, the extravagant trips, the surprises, and the dramatics are likely few and far between. Maybe they aren't over, but the sooner you start to let go of the expectation from your partner, the healthier your relationship will be. And you will start to let in the little things. The things that really matter and eventually the only things you and your partner can share.

I don't say this to be dismal. I say this to be real and to encourage you to start noticing them. The sooner you do, the more you will appreciate all the things you can still share together."

**When did you begin to realize that fun and shared activities were more than just a break in the routine—that they were actually important for both of you?**

When I felt like Parkinson's was starting to define us. I don't want every question to be about how we are doing with Parkinson's. Could it just be, " How are you doing?"

I started to think about what we used to love and how I could approach those things a little differently with Parkinson's in our lives. We both need activities

**“I don’t want every question to be about how we are doing with Parkinson’s. Could it just be, “How are you doing?”**

that have nothing to do with the disease. We have always loved getting massages and have found it to be the perfect combination for us. Between Dwight’s muscle soreness and my stress, we both need time to decompress and work out the kinks.

But I knew I wouldn’t enjoy my time off if he was home alone. And he needed me to advocate for him and be sure he was comfortable in a massage room with a total stranger. So, we started going to couples’ massage. One room, two therapists. The perfect outing.

They also know us very well at our neighborhood nail salon, where we frequently get manicures and pedicures together. These activities bring joy, relaxation, self-care, and a boost in self-esteem for both of us.

**What kinds of shared activities have brought the most joy or lightness into your lives, and what made those moments meaningful?**

We both love to read, but it has become too difficult for Dwight. And audiobooks are great, but we are listening separately. So, I started reading books aloud. We found that we looked forward to bedtime more. We could put our phones away, talk about the story’s progression, and look forward to hearing what happens next.

We also started recording stories together. Writing can become tricky, even on a computer, and Dwight doesn’t like the pressure of video, so we do voice recordings right on the phone or the laptop. We might be talking about a trip we went on, and I grab the phone and ask him if I can record the story. Or we may make a plan to chat about a chosen topic.

The stories range from a favorite memory of his mom to a funny story from early comedy days. Sometimes he just talks, and sometimes I dig deeper or make it more interview-style, which also helps to prompt more details. We can also transcribe the recording. I know I will treasure these forever, and we can share them with family and friends.

**How have those activities helped your relationship beyond the day-to-day caregiving/care-partnering role?**

Even if just for a few minutes, he is my partner, my husband again.

Stopping to give someone your undivided attention is very intimate. It can be as simple as listening to a song that used to bring us joy and swaying together next to the dishwasher. Say “Hey, Google, turn it up” and embrace the moment, embrace your partner.

With this disease, we experience so much loss of the things we used to do. I am always searching for new ways to enjoy the old things we love.





We are big fans of Broadway and especially love the best seats. But sitting in the middle is a nightmare when you have what feels like a four-minute intermission to make it to the restroom and back to your seat. We now have some great ADA seats that let us quickly get up to the restroom line.

We used to love taking out our tandem bike; just being on the bike brought us joy. People would wave at us, and we adored the attention. Dwight had always been in the front seat, in charge of the brakes, gears, and direction. But now I ride in the front, and all Dwight has to do is pedal. We are together, with no risk of getting lost or separated, and we can still share this experience.

**Were there any activities you tried that surprised you by how helpful or enjoyable they turned out to be?**

Looking at old photos and remembering those adventures, talking about the best parts and the worst. It has helped me to remember how many adventures we had together, even in our short time before the diagnosis. I thought it would make me sadder, but instead I feel grateful. I’m not looking back thinking, “ Oh, we don’t have that anymore, I think, “Wow, we did some really cool stuff together.”

We loved to take long walks along the river. Now we just go straight to our favorite spot and set up our chairs and snacks. We get the same result, just a little differently, and we can take in more of the best parts, listening to the water, watching our dog swim, and enjoying the wildlife.

**What challenges have you faced in making time or space for these shared moments, and how did you work through them?**

Everything about this disease is challenging. I have always been a planner, so this has been a big change for me. Making an appointment or plans with friends and needing to cancel at the last minute can be frustrating.

Living “a 36-hour day” and often feeling exhausted is tough. I work hard not to put expectations on the activities we do together. If we sit together in the sun for just 10 minutes, or if we do a voice recording and need to pick it up later, it counts. I cherish enjoying a frozen yogurt or singing together in the car. I just focus on being patient and flexible.

A few years ago, I was really starting to miss our travels. I’d never gone on an RV trip, and I thought that might be fun. Well, Dwight wasn’t driving anymore, and so I was responsible for maneuvering this gigantic thing around. I avoided going in reverse for four whole days, but we did survive. If we try that again, I’ll probably ask my friends with RV experience for some tips.

**What would you say to another care partner who feels guilty prioritizing fun when life with Parkinson’s already feels so serious?**

There is no way of knowing how much time we have in this role. If we don’t make time now, then when? And by the way, these activities are not just for our partners; they are for us too. This is the hardest job I’ve ever had, and at the end of the day, I judge myself harshly. The loudest voice in my head says I’m not doing enough. So, if I can bring some joy to our day-to-day, I feel that might be one of the most important things I can do.

# Ping Pong for Parkinson's: Small Ball, Big Benefits

Table tennis is more than a pastime—it's a compact, adaptable workout that blends aerobic movement, quick footwork, fine motor control, and constant decision-making. For people living with Parkinson's, that mix targets four essentials: balance (weight shifts and stance changes), coordination (hand-eye timing through repeated rally patterns), reaction time (reading spin and speed, then responding), and confidence (frequent success, social connection, and measurable skill gains).

Early studies suggest that table tennis can be safe and feasible for people with Parkinson's and may improve motor symptoms, postural control, and self-reported well-being—adding to the growing case for sport-based, enjoyable therapy. (source: https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8299968/)

Beyond the science, the community around the game is a powerful motivator. The nonprofit PingPongParkinson has helped turn local club nights into a worldwide movement led by and for people with Parkinson's. Chapters offer coached sessions, warm-ups tailored for rigidity and bradykinesia, and plenty of doubles play to keep rallies going.

According to the organization, there are now hundreds of chapters spanning dozens of countries, and an annual patient-led world championship that celebrates participation as much as podiums.

On the sport's global stage, the ITTF Foundation hosts the World Parkinson's Table Tennis Championships, bringing athletes together to compete, connect, and share best practices—from adaptive grips to pacing strategies between points. The event doubles as a living showcase of how structured play can nurture physical capacity and peer support.

Closer to home, chapter-run classes and senior-center programs make it easy to get started. Sessions are drop-in style, community-oriented, and designed for all abilities. Programs typically emphasize safety (spotters, barriers, stable footwear), progressive drills (from serve-receive to controlled rallies), and social time that reinforces attendance and confidence. To find details about a club near you, visit https://www.pingpongparkinson.org/usa-chapters

Getting started is simple: look for beginner-friendly sessions (or ask a local club to start one), aim for 1–2 hours per week at first, and prioritize doubles to maximize touches while minimizing fatigue. Use larger training balls or slower, controlled feeds to build rhythm; add gentle stepping patterns to challenge balance safely; and track small wins—longer rallies, cleaner first-ball contact, steadier voice projection during partner calls. Over time, those micro-victories on the table often translate into smoother daily movements and a stronger sense of agency.

In short, ping pong offers an unusually complete package for Parkinson's: targeted movement, cognitive engagement, and a welcoming community that keeps people coming back. Whether you join a local chapter night, a senior-center class, or aspire to the world championships, the message is the same—play together, improve together, and build confidence one rally at a time.

### Ping Pong Alaska

If you would like to be part of a ping pong club in the future, contact LJ at ljmedenica@yahoo.com

To watch live ping pong action, consider attending the Alaska International Senior Games (Aug 7–16 in Fairbanks). August 16 is table tennis day, and LJ will be there.

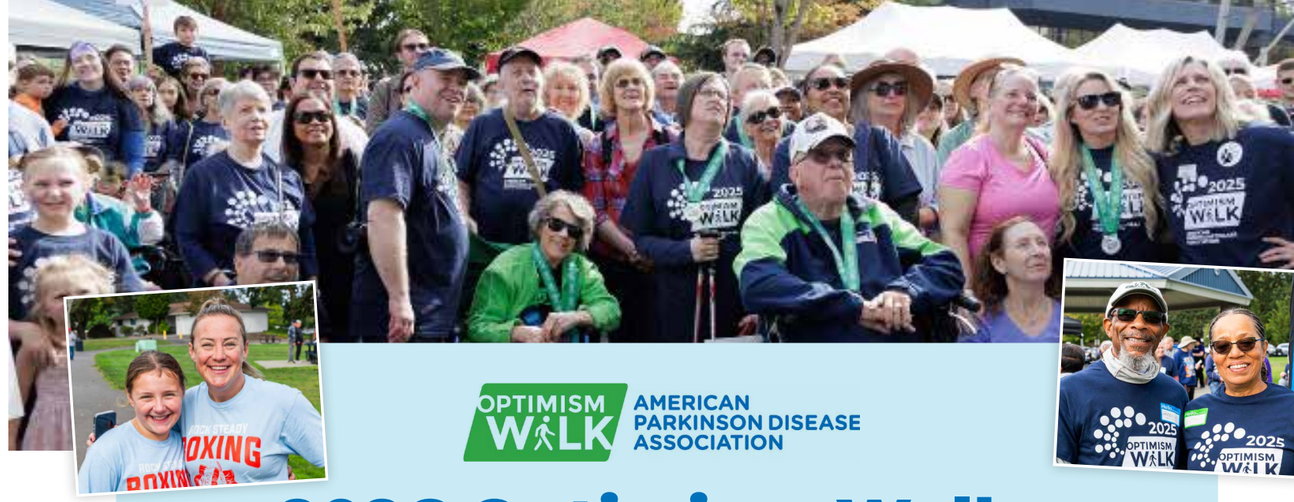
### Ping Pong Seattle

SportsForEquity partners with PingPongParkinson to host biweekly table tennis sessions designed specifically for the Parkinson's community. SportsForEquity partners with PingPongParkinson to host biweekly table tennis sessions designed specifically for the Parkinson's community.

📍 **Seattle Pacific Table Tennis Club (SPTTC)** 13249 NE 20th St, Bellevue, WA 98005

📅 Bi-weekly on Saturdays, 9:00 AM–10:30 AM

ℹ️ sportsforequity.live/programs/ParkinsonSession



OPTIMISM WALK

AMERICAN PARKINSON DISEASE ASSOCIATION

# 2026 Optimism Walks

## Walk with Purpose. Fuel Optimism.

Join us this fall for the APDA Northwest Optimism Walks and take meaningful steps to support people living with Parkinson's across Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Walk with us in Seattle (Sept 19), Tacoma (Oct 10), or walk wherever you are!

Every step you take raises vital awareness and funds for local programs, support services, and research. Whether you're walking in honor of a loved one or on behalf of the more than 60,000 people living with Parkinson's across the Northwest, your participation makes a difference. Funds raised will keep people connected, informed, and moving forward.

Each Optimism Walk is part of a nationwide movement to inspire action and bring us closer to ending Parkinson's disease.

**Register today! Start a team, join a team, or walk as an individual!** Whether you're new to fundraising or a seasoned pro, we've got you covered. We provide the tools and support you need to reach out to your network. Every dollar raised makes **a powerful impact** by funding better support, accessible education, stronger community, and ultimately, a cure.

As a participant, you'll be walking with purpose, fueling optimism, and playing a vital role in APDA's mission to help everyone impacted by Parkinson's live life to the fullest. Fundraising is easier than you'd think and it feels great to know you're making a difference!

Team Captains will receive a Team Captain Playbook that will help them grow their team, provide motivation to fundraise, and generate excitement for the event.

# APDA Northwest Optimism Walks

The Northwest Optimism Walks are an easy 1.5 mile walk.

Walkers of all abilities are welcome and can turn around at any time!

Bring the whole family!

| Seattle<br>Saturday, September 19 | South Sound<br>Saturday, October 10 |
|---|---|
| **Ship Canal Trail**<br>**130 Nickerson Street, Seattle**<br>**Festivities begin at 9:30am**<br>**Opening Ceremony 11:00am** | **Titlow Park & Lodge**<br>**8425 6th Avenue, Tacoma**<br>**Festivities begin at 9:00am**<br>**Opening Ceremony 10:30am** |
| **SIGN UP TODAY to walk in Seattle!**<br>**apda.link/SEAwalk** | **SIGN UP TODAY to walk in Tacoma!**<br>**apda.link/TACwalk** |

## Register Today!

**Questions? Contact Jeremy at (206) 348-2367**

### WE WANT YOU ON OUR WALK COMMITTEE!

We are looking for volunteers from all over the Northwest who want to help grow this event to meet outreach, participation, and fundraising goals. Our committee meets twice a month on Zoom to help plan fun activities, build team spirit, improve fundraising efforts, and generate enthusiasm leading up to this year's events. If you are interested, contact Jeremy Orbe at 206-348-2367 or jorbe@apdaparkinson.org.

## Can't make it to Seattle or Tacoma?

## Organize a Community Walk!

Bring the Optimism Walk to your own community! Gathering friends and family for a local walk is easy to organize and a meaningful way to make a difference. In just a few simple steps, you can build community, raise awareness about Parkinson's disease, and support vital programs and services.

**PICK A LOCATION** for a short, non-competitive, and family-friendly walk, such as a park with a flat, accessible walking path. If your location is a public park with picnic tables and/or a covered area, consider reserving them for your event.

**PICK A TIME** for your event. We also recommend allowing 30 minutes for check-in so attendees can arrive, register, and warm up for the walk at a comfortable pace.

**REGISTER A TEAM** at apda.link/NWwalks – Be sure to include your city/town name in your team name!

### CONTACT APDA with your walk details!

**Jeremy can be reached at 206-348-2367 or jorbe@apdaparkinson.org. We'll help spread the word through targeted emails and provide a customized flyer for your Community Optimism Walk.**





# Creative Contributions

## Art from the APDA NW Community

Do you like to draw, paint, or take photographs? Are you a cartoonist or poetry master? If so, we'd love to share your work here!

Email lbadran@apdaparkinson.org with your creative submission today!

**Joe McConnell**, Sammamish, WA

Joe is 83 and was diagnosed with Parkinsons about a year and a half ago. He has been teaching for 25 years and currently teaches weekly Northwest-native-style woodcarving.

The Dancing Owl and the Crooked Beak Dance Mask were carved for his own collection.

Uncle Davenport used to ride the rails in the 30's.

That's Billy's bike, I'll wait for him, he'll know the way home.

**Kent Willmann,** Longmont, CO

Kent was diagnosed in 2020. He taught high school social studies for more than 30 years and lives in Colorado, where early-morning bike rides offer opportunities to snap photos of couches. Kent has created numerous calendars with his couch pictures.

To learn more about the calendar or to purchase one, contact Kent at couchcalendars@gmail.com. $10 from each calendar sold will go to Parkinson's research.

# Morning Begins

By **Jim Munson**

Jim was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2019. In 2023, he had a DBS procedure and is now medicine-free. He participates in Parkinson's exercise class and sees a speech therapist. Jim uses poetry to express himself, as Parkinson's has dimmed his ability to vocalize.

Jim published a book of poems, several of which address living with Parkinson's, titled "The Quiet Poet". You can find it on Amazon.

Morning begins in negotiation—
not with the world,
but with a hand
that taps its own syncopated pattern.

A button waits.
A sleeve resists.
Time stretches, patient as a held breath,
while fingers remember
what they once knew without asking.

Coffee cools in the ritual pause,
halfway to the lips—
a moment suspended
between intention and arrival.

Even swallowing is no longer simple—
the throat forgets its rhythm,
hesitates,
as if asking permission
for something it has done all its life.

A trace of water,
a careful tilt of the head,
the quiet vigilance
no one else can see.

Words gather softly now,
arriving smaller than before—
a voice turned inward,
edges blurred,
as though the air itself
has grown heavy.

"Speak up," someone says—
but the volume knob
no longer listens.

The body speaks in interruptions:
a stutter in motion,
a hesitation mid-step,
like a song skipping
on a well-worn record.

And the mind—
once quick with its answers—
sometimes lingers in doorways,
searching for a word
that hides just out of reach.

Thoughts tangle,
threads crossing and recrossing,
until meaning loosens
and drifts.

There are moments of clarity,
bright and sudden—
and others
where the day feels
slightly out of focus,
as if seen through glass
that won't quite clear.

And yet—
there is still music.

In the careful placing of each foot,
in the deliberate grace
of standing, turning, sitting—
movements become
something almost ceremonial.

Outside, the world rushes, unbothered,
but here, inside this quieter tempo,
there are victories
no one applauds:

a steady spoonful,
a swallow that comes without effort,
a sentence carried
from beginning to end,
a name remembered
just in time.

There is humor, too—
dry, unexpected—
because sometimes laughter
moves more freely than limbs,
and even confusion
can soften into something shared.

Afternoon light leans gently
against the window,
and even the tremor softens,
as if tired of its own persistence.

And in the evening,
when the body loosens its grip
on the day's small battles,
there is a kind of peace:

not the absence of struggle,
but its companion—
acceptance,
sitting quietly in the same chair.

Tomorrow will ask again.
The hand will tremble.
The voice may falter.
The mind may wander.

But neither, entirely, will hope.

It lives
in each repeated attempt,
in every stubborn motion forward—
unsteady, perhaps,
uncertain, sometimes—
but still
movement.





# 2026 APDA Northwest Upcoming Events

## In-Person Educational Programs

**PD Education Day – TACOMA**
Monday, August 24
Riverview Christian Church

**PD Education Day – BAINBRIDGE ISLAND**
Saturday, November 7
Bainbridge Island Senior Center

**Live Well Boise**
Monday, September 21
Church of the Rockies

**Living Well with Parkinson's Community Conversations — NE Idaho & NW Montana**
Fall 2026

## APDA SIGNATURE SUPPORT SERIES

*8 week series consisting of education & connections*

**Care Partner Connection Series**
Virtual – on Zoom
Fridays, Sept 18 – Nov 13
Learn More - apda.link/NWCare

**PRESS – For Newly Diagnosed with PD**
Virtual – on Zoom
Tuesdays, Sept 29 – Nov 17
Learn More: apda.link/NWPRESS

## Join APDA's Legacy Society and Leave a Lasting Impact

The American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) is committed to supporting people impacted by Parkinson's disease by increasing access to education and wellness, building community, providing support, and investing in research.

Including APDA in your will helps improve lives and costs you nothing today. Join other supporters in our APDA Legacy Society by including APDA in your will or trust, and invest in a brighter future for everyone living with Parkinson's.

**August is Make-A-Will Month— a perfect opportunity to create your legacy.**

Take the next step:
Contact an estate planning attorney or create your will online for free using Giving Docs. Reach out to us at **krichards@apdaparkinson.org** or **206-348-0213** to learn more.

apda AMERICAN PARKINSON DISEASE ASSOCIATION
NORTHWEST CHAPTER

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